

*The LMD System:
A Problematic of an ESP Perspective*

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Abstract

The Algerian decision makers seem to call for urgent implementation of ESP courses in all faculties, across all departments, including mostly all specialities at both levels; graduation and post-graduation. However, while the English department is supposed to be responsible to run foreign language teachers' training programs, ESP teaching methodology still display a real absence at both the "LMD" and traditional systems. This paper aims, therefore, at seeking the main issues of training the future ESP teachers within an Algerian context, fundamentally at the English department of Abou Bekr Belkaid University, Tlemcen.

In this respect, one should think of *how to bridge the existing gap between the requirements of different situations and the English department. And how would it be possible to plan pre-service ESP teacher training as a key to cross this bridge for a better LMD professionalization?*

Key words: *LMD system, ESP, university programs, training.*

One of those strong impacts of globalization as a universal process in this new millennium is to bring change to many countries. In this line of thought, Algeria as the rest of the globe has struggled to keep in touch with recent world changes via reforming not only its political, economic and commercial policies but goes beyond to reach the system of education and it could be clearly seen at the tertiary level where almost all institutions have adopted the new educational system mainly the ‘LMD’ as the new-fangled policy for a change.

‘Licence-Master-Doctorate’ or ‘LMD’ for short, is considered to be the literary translation of what is already known as the Bachelor-Master- PhD process, henceforth ‘BMP’. Following the Bologna Declaration, the LMD as a system has been adapted in a wide range of countries. LMD, in this case, is regarded as a system whose main components are integrated together for the sake of reaching a well-defined objective which is the better professionalization of prospective Algerian workers, teachers, scientists, researchers and so forth, to meet both the needs and the requirements of the working life and the different markets.

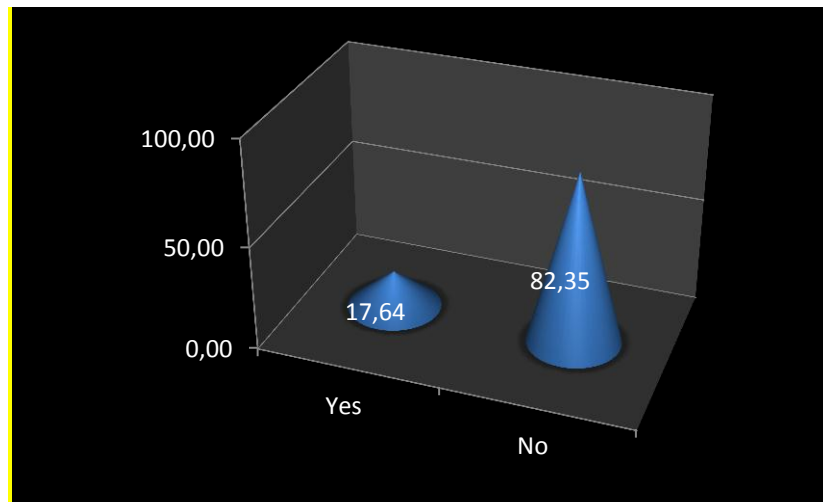
The implementation of such a system in Algeria has led to call for the implementation of ESP courses in different departments across all faculties. As a result, language teachers who were trained in areas such as linguistics, civilization, literature have been asked to teach ESP courses. This latter can be considered as a challenge for those teachers.

In this sense, what might be debatable is, in fact, *how to bridge the existing gap between the requirements of different situations and the English department? How would it be possible to plan pre-service ESP teacher training as a key to cross this bridge for a better LMD professionalization?*

As a matter of fact, this preliminary study has taken place out of the English department. Its sample population consists of a number of English teachers working at the three (03) faculties, namely faculty of Exact Sciences, faculty of Law and Political sciences, faculty of Economics and Commercial Sciences, in an attempt at shedding light on the main issues faced the language teachers in the ESP teaching situations.

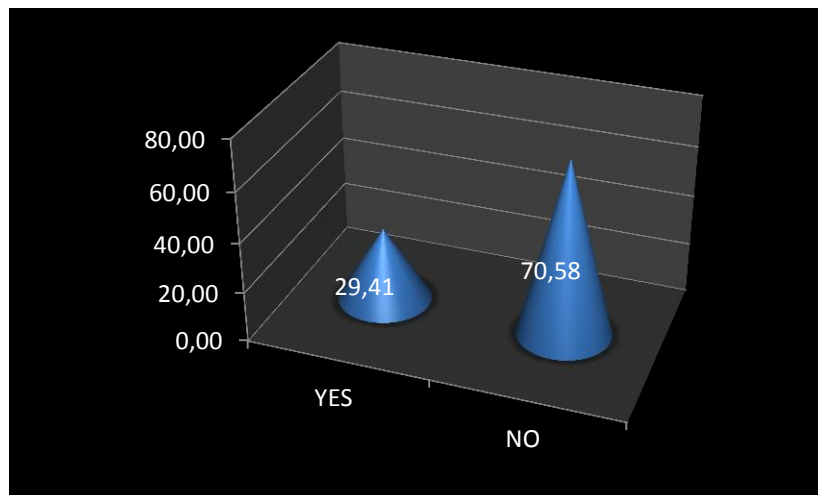
For the sake of gathering reliable data, the researcher has recourse to the use of the three (03) following research instruments, i.e., classroom observation, teachers’ questionnaire and a structured interview.

After analyzing data, the results have shown that 82% of teachers have not received any specialized training whereas 18% of teachers stated that they have undertaken a theoretical training in areas such as needs analysis, materials production and so forth, but it still remains theoretical since nothing in practice has been, mainly, done.



Bar -graph1: Undertaking Specialized Training

As for the following bar-graph, it illustrates teachers' perception about their preparation; it is almost observed that 71% agree on the fact that, they are not prepared to teach ESP. However, 29% point out that they are prepared for such a task.



Bar -graph.2: Teachers' Perception about their Preparation

The difficulties as stated by the teachers themselves have been summarized in the following headlines:

- ✓ Lack of suitable published materials;
- ✓ the absence of syllabus as well as programs to follow;
- ✓ Lack of collaboration and cooperation with ESP teachers, learners and subject-specialists.

As far as this preliminary study is concerned, the central issues are:

- ❖ Lack of specialized knowledge of the related area they are teaching.
- ❖ No prior training to ESP teaching methodology.

Based on these two prominent issues, an evaluation is, almost, needed. This latter is believed to be an essential component which may help detect both strengths and weaknesses of any system. In this vein, 'LMD', as the rest of the systems, needs to follow a defined and continuous evaluation both 'in' and 'about'.

As for the evaluation 'in the LMD system', one may refer to the evaluation of learners' performance, the learning contexts, the teaching/learning process. Whereas, the evaluation 'about the LMD system'

may constitute of the evaluation of the system itself, its main components, the programs which should be adapted and followed to achieve the so-called better professionalization. In this case, I am, fundamentally, concerned with the evaluation 'about the LMD system'.

Joining this idea, I may dare to say that ESP teaching methodology still displays a real absence at both the LMD and the traditional systems. This has led, in fact, language teachers to be ill-prepared for the area they are teaching. This has been resulted in either their failure while performing their jobs, or to a lower level, ESP teaching is regarded as a difficult task for those who lack a serious ESP teacher-training. Such a fact leads to an urgent call for the implementation of the ESP teaching methodology as a main ingredient in the LMD system mainly based on 'a pre-service teacher training'.

In this vein, Pre-service teacher training consists of two types of trainings; 'a general training' which every teacher should undergo. This latter should integrate a variety of sciences which revolve around Teaching English as a Foreign Language as its case, here, in Algeria. Teachers should be well-equipped with a sound training in areas such as linguistics, phonetics, psychology, pedagogy. Those future language teachers who may be appointed in other departments outside the English one, additionally, should undertake a specialized training where the focus has to be on other areas such as needs analysis, syllabus design, materials production, specialized language 'terminology'. Practice, in this trend, is almost required.

Ultimately, it can be argued that both 'LMD' and 'ESP' are still in their infancy here in Algeria; therefore, evaluation is, widely, needed. To put it differently, providing a continuous evaluation which should be followed by a rigorous assessment may constitute a first stone in the process of establishing solid foundations for our teaching/learning practice.

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